

Andrew Taylor, The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A bill filled with money for job training, health and education faces a veto from President George W. Bush, who complains that Democratic add-ons have made it too expensive.

Some of the president's fellow Republicans, worried about re-election, say it's actually too skimpy.

The bill, containing \$152 billion for social programs including special education, community health centers, Head Start and health research, easily passed the House on Thursday by a 276-140 vote.

The tally wasn't big enough to overcome a promised veto from the White House, which calls it "irresponsible and excessive" for busting Bush's budget by almost \$13 billion.

That's hardly a sentiment universally shared by House Republicans, who took to the floor over the past three days to complain of inadequate funding for special education, health research and literacy promotion, among other programs.

Voting yes were area representatives Russ Carnahan, D-St. Louis; William Lacy Clay, D-St. Louis; Ike Skelton, D-Lexington, and Jerry Costello, D-Belleville. They were joined by Jo Ann Emerson, R-Cape Girardeau, and Kenny Hulshof, R-Columbia.

Voting no were Todd Akin, R-Town and Country; Roy Blunt, R-Stafford, and John Shimkus, R-Collinsville.

The Senate has yet to act on companion legislation.

Rep. Michael Castle, a moderate Republican from Delaware, chided Democrats for increasing by less than 3 percent the funding for health research by the National Institutes of Health.

"The amount ... would be almost the smallest increase for NIH in 38 years," Castle complained. "New research opportunities will go unfunded. The number of new therapies will continue to decline."

The 125-page bill — accompanied by a 429-page report — weaves increases long-sought by Democrats into programs within the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education such as child care for the poor, the Healthy Start programs combating infant mortality and a \$390 increase in the maximum

Pell Grant for low-income college students. To build GOP support, there's a big boost for abstinence education.

The health and education measure passed Thursday consumed about half of Democrats' planned increases for domestic programs, providing increases for heating subsidies for the poor, rural health care, family planning and grants for local schools.

Moderate Republicans, often from swing districts, pressed for more.

"Increased federal special education funding is critically important," said Rep. Mike Ferguson, R-N.J., who succeeded Wednesday in adding \$50 million to the special education budget.

Rep. Vernon Ehlers, R-Mich., a physicist by training, won an additional \$16 million Wednesday to improve training of math and science teachers.

Bush has stepped up his criticism of Democrats' budgetary moves in recent weeks, including a Thursday speech in Nashville, Tenn., in which he promised to kill Democrats' efforts to add to his budget. He argues that the domestic add-ons, totaling \$205 billion over the next five years, will result in higher taxes.

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